

the flexibility to continue to offer alternative forms of care via telehealth to people when this pandemic is over so the providers can readily adapt in the event that another pandemic or another disaster forces us to shift healthcare services back to virtual care. We need to continue telehealth now and provide the reimbursement but also ensure that it is going to be there for the future because it is working.

I am committed to working with my colleagues on bipartisan solutions to the challenges we talked about today. Yesterday, I introduced legislation called the Telehealth Response for E-prescribing Addiction Treatment Services Act, or TREATS Act, to make permanent a number of temporary waivers for telehealth services and bolster telehealth options for addiction treatment services. Specifically, the bill is going to do a couple of things.

First, it will allow for a patient to be prescribed lower scheduled drugs like Suboxone or buprenorphine through telehealth on their first visit. Current law requires you go to an in-person visit when needing any controlled substances, but this has been a deterrent to patients in crisis and in urgent need of treatments from schedule III or IV drugs.

Our bill is important. By the way, it also limits abusive practices by limiting telehealth visits to those who have both audio and video capabilities to be able to interact with the treatment providers to reduce fraud and abuse when it is your first visit. It would also prohibit prescribing schedule II drugs like opioids that are more prone to being abused through these telehealth visits. So we have provisions in there to avoid abuse, but it is important to continue this telehealth when the other options aren't there.

Second, our bill would allow for Medicare to bill for audio-only or telephone telehealth visits if it is not the patient's first visit. In-person visits or telehealth visits with video components are important, and I think it is important to have that on the first visit because they can allow for more robust checkups and evaluations.

Due to distance or access to broadband, these types of appointments aren't always possible. We still need to focus on safety and robust treatment options, but in order to balance the needs of patients, we have proposed to allow our Nation's seniors to use phones for subsequent behavioral health visits when they do not have access to the internet.

There is no question that the greatest priority facing our country at this moment is this unprecedented coronavirus pandemic, but this new U.N. report and the rising number of overdoses in Ohio and around the country show that there is even more at stake here than we realize. We know of the direct impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, but losing ground on addiction and behavioral health is one of the

indirect casualties. Not only must Congress ensure our addiction health services have the resources they need to adapt to this new reality, but we also have to redouble our efforts to slow the spread of the coronavirus so we don't lose ground on this addiction crisis just as we were making progress and that we don't keep more Americans from achieving their God-given potential.

PROTESTS

Mr. President, I hadn't planned to talk about this, but I was watching the floor earlier today when there was a heated discussion on the Senate floor about the chaos and violence we have seen on the streets in many of our great cities.

The peaceful demonstrations, which developed really spontaneously after the tragic death of George Floyd and other injustices, delivered a powerful message about the need to address racial disparities and about the need for police reforms.

The right to demonstrate peacefully must be protected, but the looting, the desecration of monuments, the arson, and the destruction of property, including small businesses in some of these communities of color—it breaks my heart to see some of these small business owners talk about what they are going through; the injuries to our law enforcement officers who are just doing their jobs, doing what they are asked to do in a professional way; and, of course, the self-appointed statue destroyers we have seen. This lawlessness, in too many instances, must not be tolerated. Those who have exploited the situation and the peaceful demonstrations to foment this violence are undermining the cause of the peaceful marchers and further dividing an already polarized country.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

S. 4049

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to discuss what I believe is an important and consequential matter at this moment: the way ahead for U.S. relations with our friend and partner, Israel.

The pending legislation before us includes a plan to codify and extend a multiyear commitment of American security assistance to Israel. Specifically, it would codify a memorandum of understanding reached during the Obama administration to provide \$38 billion over 10 years in security assistance to Israel. That is \$3.8 billion a year. That is a significant promise. In fact, on an annual basis, that \$3.8 billion represents over half of current U.S. foreign military funds around the world.

It is a big commitment, especially at a time when we are struggling to invest in supporting our workers, our businesses, and our economy here at home during this global pandemic.

While it is a sizable commitment, it is one I have supported because Israel is a close ally and friend that lives in a very dangerous and volatile part of the world. It is surrounded on many fronts with enemies who would like to destroy it, including Iran, Hamas, and Hezbollah.

Moreover, Israel and the United States have a variety of shared interests. Most importantly, in my view, the United States has an enduring obligation to support a secure homeland for the Jewish people after the horrors of the Holocaust.

Under normal circumstances, I would not even come to the Senate floor today. I have consistently supported the security assistance, and I still do. So why am I here today?

I am here because while I remain strongly committed to the security of Israel and providing security assistance, I am also strongly opposed to Prime Minister Netanyahu's declared intention to unilaterally annex parts of the West Bank starting this month.

The unilateral annexation of parts of the West Bank would totally undermine what has been, at least until the Trump administration, bipartisan American policy in support of a two-state solution that would ensure the security and the rights of both Israelis and Palestinians.

Under the leadership of President Harry Truman, the United States championed the establishment of the State of Israel as a homeland for the Jewish people, and that remains a steadfast American commitment. But the right to a secure homeland for the Jewish people does not include the right to unilaterally annex territories on the West Bank and deny the Palestinian people a viable state and homeland of their own.

So I will say it again: The United States should support and continue to support the legitimate security needs of Israel, but we also need to stand up for a just two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and for the rule of law and international order that the United States has championed ever since the end of World War II.

Now, as I said before, the bill before us would codify and extend the memorandum of understanding between the United States and Israel on security assistance signed on September 14, 2016. You can be sure that that memorandum of understanding for security assistance never contemplated Israel's annexing parts of the West Bank.

In fact, the opposite is true. Part of the American rationale for providing Israel with robust military assistance has been to give Israel the confidence to seek a secure peace based on a two-state solution.

Here is what National Security Advisor Susan Rice said in the Treaty

Room at the White House at the time of signing that MOU.

She first pointed out that it represented “the single largest pledge of military assistance to any country in U.S. history.” She reinforced the message that the United States remains absolutely committed to Israel’s security.

Then she said this:

That’s also why we continue to press for a resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—two states for two peoples living side by side in peace and security. As the President—

She was referring to President Obama—

has said, the only way for Israel to endure and thrive as a Jewish and democratic state is through the realization of an independent and viable Palestinian state.

That is what she said at the signing of the same MOU that we would be codifying in the bill before us.

Lest anyone think that was simply the position of a Democratic President and a Democratic administration, it was not.

Susan Rice and Condoleezza Rice have more in common than just their last names. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice attended the signing ceremony for the previous memorandum of understanding that took place on January 16, 2009, and, on that occasion, she too highlighted the need to achieve “a two-state solution building upon previous agreements and obligations.” She said: “. . . two-state solution, which is the only way, ultimately, to secure a future for Israelis and Palestinians alike over the . . . long term.”

So the Bush administration and the Obama administration, at the signings of the memorandums of understanding for security assistance, both said the only way forward was through a viable two-state solution that recognized the rights, dignity, and aspirations of both peoples.

Now, the unilateral annexation of West Bank land that Prime Minister Netanyahu has proposed would blow away, would destroy, any real prospects for a viable two-state solution. It would make a mockery of the statements made by both National Security Advisor Susan Rice and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. It would make a mockery of the tenets of a bipartisan U.S. foreign policy up until the Trump administration.

Make no mistake, those most in favor of unilateral annexation are those most opposed to any viable two-state solution.

Now, I am under no illusions that a viable two-state solution is a near-term prospect. It is not right around the corner. The Palestinian Authority has been weak, and, until recently, because of the one-sided actions of the Trump administration, has decided not to negotiate. But even though the near-term chances of a negotiated two-state solution remain remote, we must preserve—we must preserve—that op-

tion, and preserving that option means strongly opposing the unilateral annexation of West Bank territory.

Now, the unilateral annexation by Israel of all or any part of the West Bank will unleash a cascade of harmful consequences.

One, if we become complicit in this action, it will harm our national security interests and credibility by undermining the fundamental principles of international law that we in the United States have championed since the end of World War II.

Two, it will further isolate Israel in the international community, and many countries—including in Europe—are likely to respond with different forms of sanctions. Some are already moving in that direction.

Three, it will harm both our position and Israel’s interests in the Middle East, by weakening allies like Jordan, and threaten to unravel the warming relationships Israel has built with the Sunni Gulf States to counter Iran.

The bottom line is that unilateral annexation will greatly strengthen the hand of our common enemies—Iran, Hamas, and Hezbollah—and hurt friends like Jordan.

Four, it will harm Israel’s security by completely undermining the credibility of the Palestinian Authority and its capacity to effectively govern the Palestinian areas on the West Bank.

Five, unilateral annexation will ultimately lead to one of two outcomes. Either all the people in the annexed areas will be extended equal democratic rights and Israel will risk losing its Jewish identity, or Palestinians on the West Bank will be relegated to small, disconnected enclaves with no viable future—what two former Israeli Prime Ministers have warned is “slipping toward apartheid.”

Six, if the current Netanyahu government heads down the road of permanently denying the Palestinian people their right to self-determination and denies them their basic human rights, then Israel will increasingly alienate itself from America. That is not in the interest of either of our two countries.

So those are at least six of the harmful results of unilateral annexation. I am going to elaborate on each of those points.

No. 1, any American acceptance of unilateral annexation will undermine the very principle of international law that we have fought to uphold in the international community since the end of World War II. The United States has been the architect of the rules-based international order, as reflected in the U.N. Charter of 1945, as well as in the Declaration on Principles of International Law, based on the U.N. Charter, that were signed in 1970 and found in many other universally agreed-to documents and commitments.

It is well established that one country cannot take territory gained from another in war. Now, I know the Trump administration has done all sorts of mental and verbal gymnastics to aban-

don this long-held American international principle to create an exception for Israel, but they look very foolish.

We all recognize that some of the territory proposed to be annexed by Prime Minister Netanyahu’s plan would ultimately be included within Israel’s official boundaries through a process of negotiations. Land swaps have been a regular feature of the talks, but there is a world of difference between a negotiated settlement and one imposed by illegal, unilateral annexation.

If we, the United States, aid and abet this effort, we will lose all our credibility in condemning other instances of unilateral annexation. I have with me a wrath of angry statements from Senators of both parties made here on the floor of the Senate—outraged by Russia’s unilateral annexation of Crimea; outraged by Russia’s efforts to extend its sovereignty over other parts of Ukraine—and Secretary Pompeo stating that the United States “does not and will not ever recognize Moscow’s annexation of Crimea.”

I agree. He was right to say it. We, on the Senate floor, were right to say those things. Those were violations of international law. In fact, not only did we condemn those actions; we rallied other countries to impose sanctions on Russia.

But what will Secretary Pompeo say next time? What is Mr. Pompeo going to say if Turkey, which currently occupies northern Cyprus, should decide one day that it will unilaterally annex that territory? That would give Turkey more direct claims to the undersea gas fields between Cyprus and Israel.

What about China’s claims to the islands of the South China Sea, or other disputed territories in many parts of the world that are claimed by multiple parties?

The whole reason to abide by a rules-based system is to say not only no to your adversaries; you must also say no to your friends. Otherwise, it is not a rules-based system at all; it is the global jungle.

That is why President Eisenhower said no both to our British and Israeli friends when they tried to seize the Suez Canal in 1956.

If we accept Prime Minister Netanyahu’s unilateral annexation, we will not have any credibility the next time around when an adversary does so.

In fact, here is what President Eisenhower had to say at that time:

There can be no peace without law. And there can be no law if we were to invoke one code of international conduct for those who oppose us and another for our friends.

That is what President Eisenhower said, and, of course, it makes sense. On February 20, 1957, President Eisenhower broadcast an address to the American people about the need for Israel to withdraw from territories it captured during the 1956 war. In that case, he said we would not consider occupation of another country as a

'peaceful means' or proper means to achieve justice and conformity with international law."

This is a well-established principle that the United States has championed in the international arena.

No. 2, the unilateral annexation of parts of the West Bank will further isolate Israel in Europe and across the world. The EU's foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell, said recently that annexation "would inevitably have significant consequences" for the EU's relationship with Israel, and already an array of European parliaments are preparing responses, including sanctions.

In a joint statement issued on June 24 by the current and incoming EU members on the U.N. Security Council—that is Germany, Belgium, France, Estonia, and Ireland—together with the UK and Norway, they together said: "We also share the Secretary-General's assessment that if any Israeli annexation of the Occupied West Bank—however big or small—is implemented, it would constitute a clear violation of international law."

They went on to say "that following our obligations and responsibilities under international law, annexation would have consequences for our close relationship with Israel and would not be recognized by us."

None of this should be surprising. Unlike the Trump administration, they are being consistent in how they react to violations of international law, applying the same standards to adversaries and friends alike.

Israel has often been unfairly singled out and unfairly treated and criticized at the United Nations, and the United States has, on many occasions, properly exercised its veto to defend Israel against unfair treatment. But in this case, if Israel moves forward with unilateral annexation, strong opposition at the U.N. would not be the result of the world treating Israel differently or unfairly; it would be a self-inflicted wound. Again, the Trump administration may shield Prime Minister Netanyahu's government from U.N. action, but don't count on future administrations to defend illegitimate actions.

Three, unilateral annexation will undermine our security interests in the Middle East and those of Israel. It will put our friends in the region in great jeopardy and weaken our coordination with Gulf States against Iran.

King Abdullah of Jordan very recently emphasized that annexation is "unacceptable" and recently warned the Senate of a "massive conflict" if unilateral annexation proceeds.

Here is what the widely respected retired Israeli Defense Force Major General Amos Gilahd said on June 8 when asked about annexation:

It is a disaster. Why do we need to do it? It is unnecessary. It is a threat to Israel. We might endanger our security cooperation with Jordan that is so valuable that most Israelis can't even imagine.

Arab leaders from the Gulf States, who have been strengthening coopera-

tion with Israel in recent years, issued similar warnings. The Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to the United States, Ambassador Al-Otaiba, headlined a recent article, "It's either Annexation or Normalization."

He said: "Once it is clear that there is no longer a realistic chance of a viable, sovereign state of Palestine being created, it becomes more difficult for Arab leaders to justify publicly their plans to further develop strategic cooperation with Israel."

I know it is fashionable in some places these days to discount these warnings from Arab leaders. After all, it is true, they have cried wolf before when it comes to following through on their warnings about certain Israeli actions. We are told: Don't worry. Don't worry, they don't really mean it; they are just making these pronouncements to placate the Arab street.

Maybe so, but there is a point where the Arab street will rebel, when it will explode. And that may be the day when Israel signals that it will unilaterally annex territory in the West Bank and eliminate any prospects for a peaceful two-state solution.

What will be the result? The result will be to strengthen Iran, to strengthen Hamas, to strengthen Hezbollah, handing them a very potent weapon against Israel and the United States. They will say they have been proved right, that Israel never intended to negotiate a just settlement and that the United States has been complicit.

Four, unilateral annexation will jeopardize American-Israeli cooperation with the Palestinian Authority to provide security and stability in the West Bank. Unlike Hamas, the Palestinian Authority long ago recognized Israel's right to exist as part of a dialogue for peace and a just settlement.

As former IDF Major General Gilead pointed out, the leader of the Palestinian Authority, President Abbas, "believes that terror does not serve the best interests of the Palestinians."

He went on to say: "We have a very satisfactory security cooperation relationship with the PA."

He predicts: "The moment there is unilateral annexation, the PA will lose its legitimacy. If they do, sooner or later they will not be able to show their faces in the Palestinian street. And who will pay the price? Our soldiers."

A respected group known as the Commanders for Israel's Security—a group of over 220 retired Israeli generals and equivalent ranked individuals—expressed similar fears, saying that the prospect of unilateral annexation, like the coronavirus, was an "ominous development" and spelling out the risk of the full collapse of the Palestinian Authority and its security agencies.

Hamas has always argued that the Palestinian Authority had been played the fool when it recognized Israel's right to exist. They argued that Israel would never agree to a just settlement if Palestinians first gave up armed re-

sistance and first recognized Israel. If Israel proceeds with unilateral annexation, the legitimacy of the Palestinian Authority will be diminished and Hamas will be the beneficiary.

Five, unilateral annexation and the abandonment of any viable two-state solution will lead to one of two possible outcomes, neither of them meeting the goals of the parties. Those two different paths have been described by Israeli leaders themselves.

Here is the way former Israeli Prime Minister and Defense Minister Ehud Barak explained the situation in a Haaretz interview in June 2017. He said: "If we keep controlling the whole area from the Mediterranean to the river Jordan where some 13 million people are living—8 million Israelis, 5 million Palestinians—if only one entity reigned over this whole area, named Israel it would become inevitably—that's the key word, inevitably—either non-Jewish or non-democratic." That is from a former Israeli Prime Minister.

In the event of a scenario in which Palestinians living in an annexed West Bank are given full rights and allowed to vote, Barak predicted Israel would quickly become a "binational state with an Arab majority and civil war."

The second option, if you abandon a two-state solution, according to the former Prime Minister, the second option is the current path, he said, "a slippery slope toward apartheid."

Because those two outcomes are undesirable, he pointed out that Israel has a "compelling imperative" to pursue a solution of two states for two peoples.

Another former Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, has also repeatedly warned that Israel is on a path to apartheid if the two-state solution collapses. He said, if that happens, Israel will "face a South African style struggle for equal voting rights, and as soon as that happens, the state of Israel is finished."

Just recently in the New York Times, former Israeli Ambassador to the United States Sallai Meridor said: "If we take steps that make separation from the Palestinians impossible, we may destroy the very root of the entire Zionist enterprise."

Six, I believe unilateral annexation will have all the harmful impacts I have discussed on the Senate floor today and many more that so many Israelis have warned about. I hope Prime Minister Netanyahu will pull back from the brink. But hope and prayer are not a policy. In normal times, an American President from either political party would have made clear that such action is unacceptable to the United States of America, but these are not normal times. We actually have an American Ambassador to Israel now who is promoting this unilateral annexation plan and who opposes a two-state solution. Here is what now-Ambassador Friedman said in November 2016:

There has never been a “two state solution” only a “two state narrative.”

He describes it as:

an illusion that serves the worst intentions of both the United States and the Palestinian Arabs. It has never been a solution, only a word narrative. But even the narrative itself now needs to end.

That is from the current U.S. Ambassador in 2016.

In 2016, our current ambassador also said that he is in favor of extending permanent Israeli control and sovereignty over the entire area from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea, clearly snuffing out any prospects for a two-state solution and the viable way forward.

Ultimately, of course, the government of Israel will make its own decisions, and then, we here in the United States will have to make ours. The United States must have a position that reflects our values and our ideals—our ideals of democracy, of human rights, of equal justice and rule of law and self-determination.

God knows we are far from perfect here, and we can see that clearly during this moment of national reckoning around racial justice and equity. But we have set those principles as our goals, as our North Star, and until this Trump administration came along, we have also made human rights and the right of self-determination a key pillar of our bipartisan American foreign policy.

It is those principles that have led us to support a secure and democratic Israel as the home for the Jewish people and the establishment of a separate viable state as the homeland for the Palestinian people.

The American people support a two-state solution and significantly the American Jewish committee in the 2019 survey of American Jewish opinion shows overwhelming support for a two-state solution among the American Jewish community and a large majority who say Israel should be willing to dismantle all or some of the settlements as part of a peace agreement. The next generation—this younger generation—of Americans and of American Jews is even more focused on issues of human and political rights for all peoples, Israelis and Palestinians.

There are many who have said that the possibility of a two-state solution disappeared long ago, with the expansion of settlements and outposts and the network of roads and checkpoints. They have called the prospects for a two-state solution a delusion, a mirage; yet, even as the facts on the ground have made a two-state solution harder to realize, many of us continue to see that as the vision for the future, one that brings hope to both peoples.

Make no mistake the unilateral annexation of parts of the West Bank would be the final nail in the coffin of that idea. So what happens then? What do we do? Once any remaining hope for that vision is extinguished, I think we are in uncharted territory. As Presi-

dent Obama noted in one of his speeches, “The situation for the Palestinian people is intolerable.” And he drew parallels to the struggle of African Americans for full and equal rights.

Secretary of State John Kerry has said that if the choice is one state, Israel can either be Jewish or democratic; it cannot be both. “You would have millions of Palestinians permanently living in segregated enclaves in the middle of the West Bank, with no real political rights, separate legal, education and transportation systems, vast income disparities, under a permanent military occupation that deprives them of the most basic freedoms. Separate and unequal is what you would have.”

Nelson Mandela often talked about the need to ensure a secure State of Israel as a homeland for the Jewish people and the rights of the Palestinian people. He said: “We know too well that our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians.” There is a memorial statue to Nelson Mandela in Ramallah.

What do we do? What do we do—those of us who are committed to a vibrant, secure, and democratic Israel that is a home for the Jews but are also concerned about the abandonment of the vision of a two-state solution that also respects the aspirations and rights of the Palestinians?

As I said at the beginning of these remarks, I have strongly supported security assistance for Israel, and I continue to do so. I also pointed out that National Security Advisor Susan Rice and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice both indicated in their comments at the signing ceremony of the MOUs for security assistance that a viable two-state solution was the only—their words—only way to permanent peace.

For all the reasons I have stated today, I do not believe that the U.S. Government, the U.S. taxpayer should be aiding and abetting Prime Minister Netanyahu’s plan to unilaterally annex the West Bank. The American Government and the American taxpayer must not facilitate or finance such a process. That is why today a group of 12 Senators has filed an amendment to the bill to make that position clear—the position that we fully support the robust \$38 billion security assistance to Israel but also make it clear that those funds should not be used to facilitate and promote unilateral annexation.

There are many who say that this does not go far enough, and there are others who oppose annexation but say: Pass the security assistance without making any statement about annexation or without taking any action. To them, I am reminded of former Israeli Defense Minister and Commander Moshe Dayan’s statement saying: “Our American friends offer us money, arms, and advice. We take the money, we take the arms, and we decline the advice.”

We are friends, the United States and Israel. We have many common inter-

ests, but we will also have our differences. This is a moment when, yes, we should provide the security assistance, the military assistance. Yet, in doing so, we should also make clear that it should not be used in any way to promote unilateral annexation.

Our view in filing this amendment is that the only way to reconcile our strong support for a safe and secure Israel and our commitment to establishment of two states for two peoples living side by side is what we proposed.

I hope and pray that Prime Minister Netanyahu will not move forward with his unilateral annexation plan. I hope we can continue to say that the U.S.-Israel relationship is built not only on shared interests but also on shared values.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Executive Calendar No. 750, and all nominations on the Secretary’s desk with the exception of PNs 1785, 1923, 1975, 1525, 1526, 1795 through 1798, 1805, 1924 through 1926, 1952, 1865, 1867 through 1874, 1876 through 1897, 1954 through 1963; that the nominations be confirmed and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate, all en bloc; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be general

Gen. Gustave F. Perna

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY’S DESK

IN THE AIR FORCE

PN1950 AIR FORCE nomination of Kirk W. Greene, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 2, 2020.

PN1974 AIR FORCE nomination of Patterson G. Aldueza, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 8, 2020.

IN THE ARMY

PN1358 ARMY nomination of Michael F. Coerper, which was received by the Senate and appeared in Congressional Record of January 6, 2020.

PN1804 ARMY nominations (146) beginning ROHUL AMIN, and ending D015498, which